

Families Affected By Imprisonment (FABI) Project

INTRODUCTION

Circle's FABI Project aims to '*minimise the impact of parental imprisonment on children and families*'. We are funded to work in the following areas: North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, West Lothian, Fife & Forth Valley, Tayside.

To achieve the project's aims, our Family Outreach Workers and Counsellor adopt a strengths-based and solution-focussed approach in all the work that they undertake with the children, parents and families they support. This approach allows family members to build on their existing strengths, rather than deficits, and in partnership with the whole family they can be empowered to identify strategies to promote positive change.



Some examples of the wide variety of interventions that we carry out on a day-to-day basis are:

- Strengthening of family relationships including improved communication
- Delivery of group work focusing on themes of managing stress and anxiety and parenting
- Therapeutic interventions, e.g. counselling, to improve the adverse experiences of trauma, loss and abuse
- Advocacy and participation
- Use of the Parents Under Pressure (PuP) Programme
- One to one direct support for children and young people
- Support to parents to improve their understanding of their involvement with offending behaviour and developing strategies to reduce offending

BENEFICIARIES

The children and families who are supported by this project will be dealing with a variety of challenging circumstances such as experiences of trauma, financial adversity and homelessness. The project aimed to support 100 – 120 families in 2020/21 and over the year supported:

Families	115
Parents/carers	131
Children	173
TOTAL no of family members	304

In addition, the Family Outreach Worker (FOW) in the Addiewell Project supported 25 men and fathers throughout the last year. This is over and above the numbers quoted in the table above. The FOW

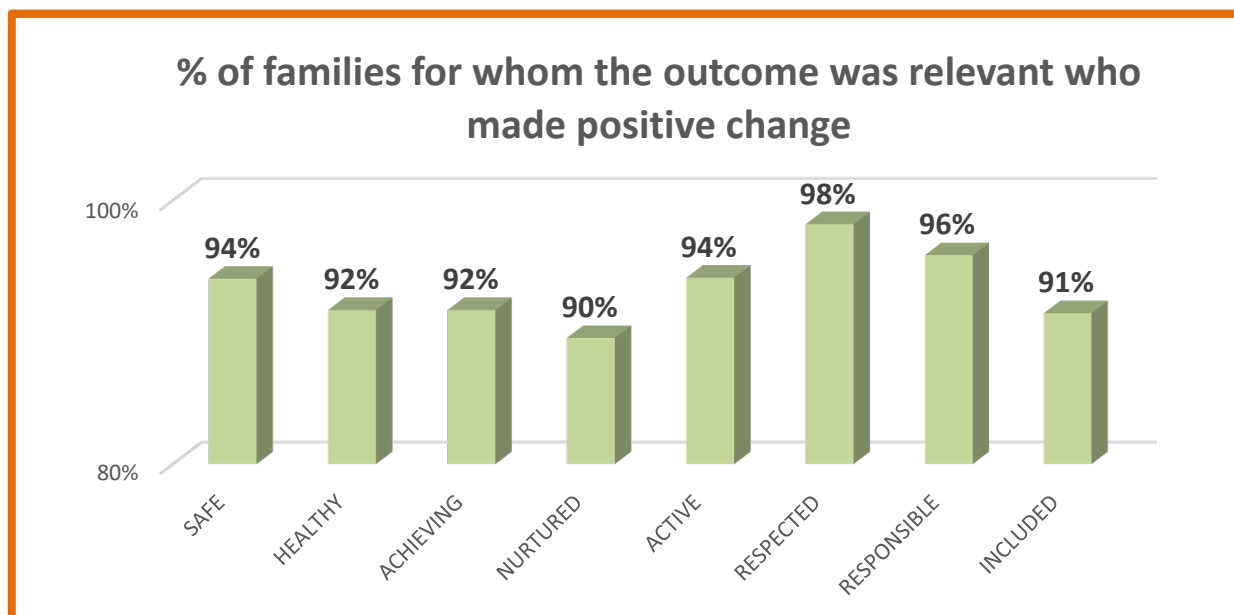
provided advice and guidance regarding contact with children, accessing relevant legal, housing and financial support and liaising with other professional supports, e.g. Justice Social Workers, Children and Family Social Workers and Solicitors. Furthermore, an additional four families were supported in South Lanarkshire as part of a short-term piece of work from December 2019 – June 2020.

OUTCOMES

Circle works alongside family members to identify their specific support needs and concerns, enabling them to work towards improving their health, wellbeing and resilience.

We use the *Getting it right for every child* (GIRFEC) approach which supports children and young people to grow up feeling loved, safe and respected and to realise their full potential. At home, in school or the wider community, every child and young person should be Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included. These SHANARRI indicators are what we use to measure the progress made by the families we support.

Across all the services, there were 71 families for whom service ended in the year, of which 56 reported outcomes where positive change was made. This is further detailed below:



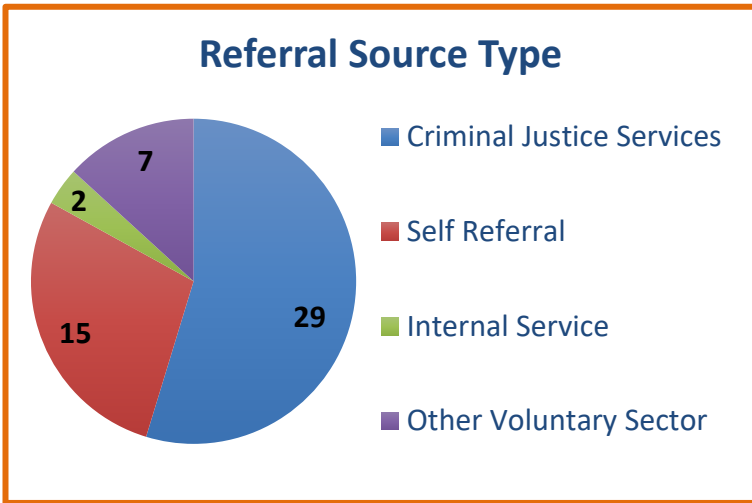
The positive outcomes experienced by families supported by the FABI project include:

- Improved understanding of the impact of their behaviours, e.g. offending, and the impact on family life
- Increased access to assertive addiction and therapeutic support services
- Reduction in offending behaviour

“Yes, completely made a huge difference. Has given me strength to stand up for myself. Confidence in groups as well as individually. Confidence moving forward with my children. PuP work has really opened my eyes up to small relevant changes.” (Parent)

REFERRAL TYPE AND REFERRAL REASON

53 families were referred into FABI’s services in 2020/21 from a variety of sources and for a number of different reasons as outlined in the charts below:

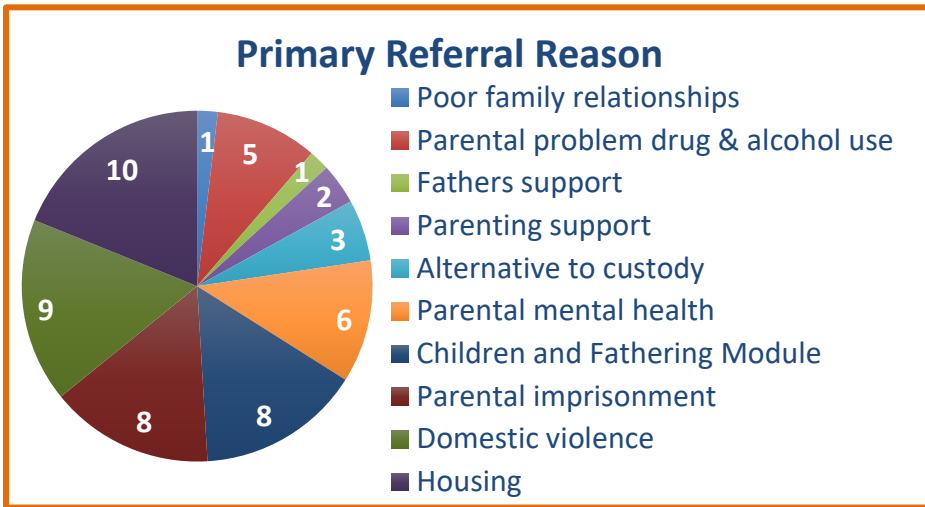


“I’ve enjoyed just being able to be me and not being ignored or judged by anyone,

I’ve enjoyed the group’s because there is so many different types of learning, especially with having certificates just shows us that we have come along way to build ourself up, also enjoyed (workers) relaxing exercises lol,

I have been a person that I am willing to learn anything to make me a better person/mum”

(Parent who attended our Zoom ‘Women’s Groups’)



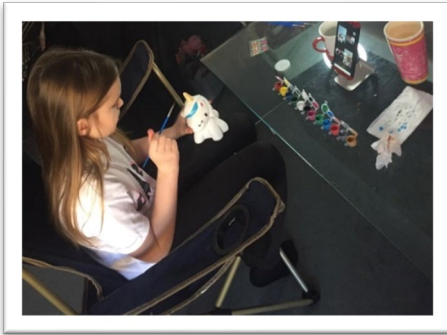
“(Worker) came into the boys and I’s life in December 2019. Both boys warmed to (worker) very quickly and were always eager for her visits and would often ask when they would be seeing her next. (Worker) is a credit to the Caledonian service with her warm, calm, friendly and approachable manner. She has been invaluable in helping me support the boys throughout. We will miss her but certainly won’t forget her.”

(Parent)

Across all of the FABI services, the average length of involvement was 60 weeks.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Circle's work is rarely done in isolation. The children and families we work with often experience a wide variety of challenges that require a number of organisations and individuals to work together to help them find their own specific solutions.



Circle's FABI Project operated 7 services providing support to families across ten local authorities in Scotland in 2020/21. Partnerships exist with HMP Addiewell, ASC, SHINE Women's Mentoring Service, South Lanarkshire Council and Women's Aid regarding the direct provision of services. Relationships with other agencies is vital in ensuring families can access timely support that reflects their individual circumstances. Agencies/services that the FABI Project has worked closely with in 2020/2021 are from a very wide range of statutory and third sector services including Recovery Café and Hubs, Women's Justice Services, Addictions Services, Community Justice Social Work, Children & Families Social Work, Housing, Mental Health Services, NHS, Financial Support Services, Solicitors, Advocacy Services and clothing and food banks.

Furthermore, Circle actively shares experience and knowledge with charity partners, academics and politicians. Some examples of this are:

- Participation in both the Cross-Party Group for Children and Families Affected by Imprisonment and the Cross-Party Group for Women and Justice
- Participation at Shine's 'Celebration of Women's Journey' as part of activities relating to International Women's Day
- Participation in Third Sector Community Justice Networks in North Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire
- Participation in development and planning of CJVSF's (Criminal Justice Voluntary Sector Forums) Training and Development Group
- Supporting the learning and development of two social work students on placement by providing link worker and practice teacher support
- Participation in dissertation research with a particular focus on families' experiences of imprisonment and involvement of justice services
- Delivery of information sessions to services including specialist public health nurses

The FABI team took part in a range of training last year including two members of the team working towards their accreditation in the Parents Under Pressure (PuP) Programme.

COVID-19

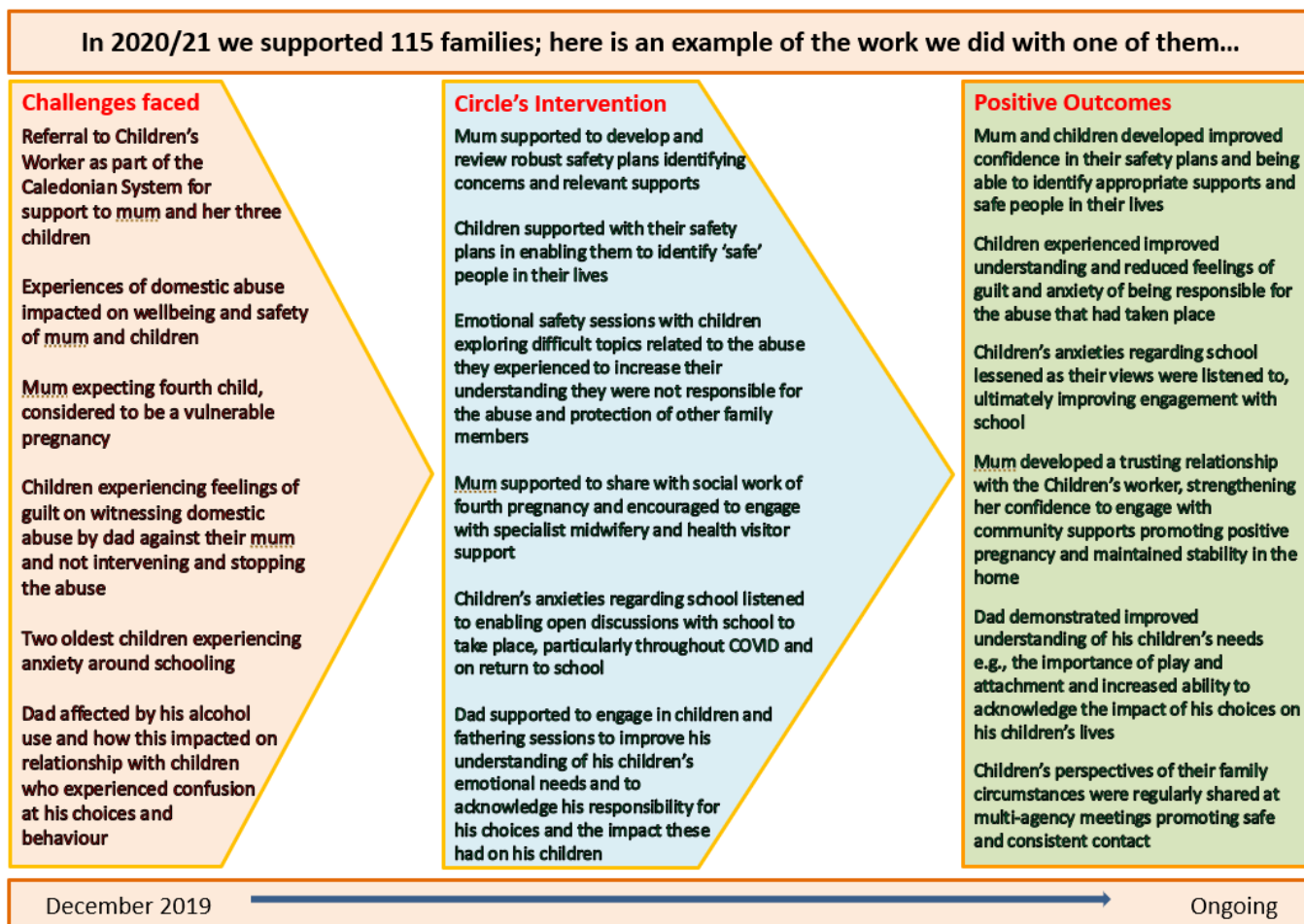
There is no doubt that COVID-19 has had a significant impact on our families and how we would provide this support, primarily strengthening our relationships through face-to-face contact. However, despite the restrictions in place, and all experiencing 'lockdown' for extended periods of time, there has been a concerted effort and commitment by the team to continue to engage and provide meaningful support to the families they work alongside. The team have demonstrated initiative, creativity and flexibility in being able to adapt our working practices with support being provided remotely. There was a great deal of effort in identifying supports and resources for families to ensure they were able to communicate via digital forums so they could engage with supports. Over the course of the last year the FABI team have delivered 24 weeks of focused 'Women's Groups' relating to the themes of Healthier Lives, Managing Stress and

Anxiety, Harm Reduction and Parenting. Additionally, the team have facilitated a half term Zoom Activity and provided families with summer activity packs, back to school packs, self-care packages, Christmas gifts and Easter Eggs. When restrictions lessened the team facilitated 1:1 outdoor activities with children and ‘walk and talks’ with parents in promoting their mental health and wellbeing. Feedback from our families has been overwhelmingly positive about the difference support has made to them.

FUNDING

In 2020/21 the project received funding from Henry Smith Charity, Clackmannanshire & Stirling ADP, South Lanarkshire Council, Scottish Government, The Robertson Trust, SODEXO and KPE4 all of which contributed to seven Family Outreach Workers, one Children’s Caledonian Worker, two Addictions Counsellors, one Senior Family Outreach Worker and one Project Manager. Unfortunately funding from Clackmannanshire and Stirling ADP came to an end in August 2020 resulting in the end of the Women’s Outreach Service in Clackmannanshire and Stirling.

CASE STUDY



PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR YEAR AHEAD

The FABI Project aims to continue to consolidate and enhance upon existing service delivery in supporting children, young people and their families. The project aims to support between 115 – 140 families over the course of the next year.

We will continue to strengthen our relationship with SODEXO and partner agencies in forward planning for the delivery of service in supporting fathers and their families from HMP **Addiewell**. We will endeavour to strengthen funding capacity for the Addiewell service as KPE4 funding is likely to reduce for 2021/22.

FABI will remain as a partner agency in providing support to women and their families as part of the **Shine Women's Mentoring Service**. It is positive that the Scottish Government have provided an additional year of funding to ensure the continuation of the service. We will actively engage in any forthcoming development plans for commissioning of the service. There will be a focus on recovery plans in supporting women pre- and post-release from prison and in the community ensuring timely connections and interventions are provided to women and their families who, not only impacted by parental imprisonment and who have significantly been affected by COVID-19.

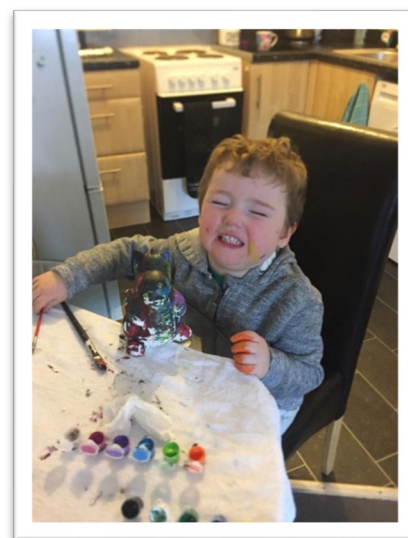
The **WOT** service secured funding from Henry Smith in October 2019 and this will run until end of September 2022 where there is a focus on supporting women who have received an 'Alternative to Custody.' Building on the evidence from the WOT evaluation we have been successful in securing three-year funding from The National Lottery Community Fund and the Charles Hayward Foundation to develop and expand the WOT service. This new element of the WOT service will focus on providing support to women and their families who have been affected by domestic abuse, poor mental health and substance use. Service delivery will commence in August 2021.

The **Caledonian System** service became fully operational in March 2019. It has been positive that the South Lanarkshire Caledonian Partnership was successful in funding being continued beyond March 2021 until 2022. The year ahead will see the Children's Worker further strengthen the relationships with the Caledonian Delivery Team and engage in direct support of children in addressing the impact of domestic abuse. As partners with South Lanarkshire Council and Women's Aid, we will be reviewing and evaluating the impact of this integrated service with the aim of funding continuing beyond March 2022 with the possibility of increasing capacity with an additional Children's worker joining the team.

There are opportunities that are already being explored with plans being implemented to ensure these are progressed in the forthcoming year:

- Application to the Delivering Equally Safe Fund for the development of a Children and Young People's Service addressing the impact of domestic abuse in North Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire. This would include two Children and Young People's workers who would provide direct 1:1 support to children and young people, facilitate focused group work and deliver educational awareness sessions in schools.
- Increase the number of FABI practitioners to be trained as PuP practitioners to strengthen a coordinated model of approach in supporting parents and families across the FABI team.

"Parents Under Pressure speaks for itself. I did feel pressure and felt like I had to get things right this time and I knew I could be really critical of myself. But although we have only covered some of the modules I am already learning and doing things I wouldn't have done with the children. It has been eye opening. It is nice to be able to have support around my relationship with my children, and how I can be a parent in a more positive way...I've felt more emotionally connected as a parent and in my own emotional wellbeing." (Parent)



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